

## Message Text

SECRET

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51

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W  
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R 281130Z MAR 75  
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4293

S E C R E T SAIGON 3709

EXDIS

NOFORN

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2  
TAGS: PINS, PINT, VS  
SUBJECT: FURTHER ON POSSIBLE CABINET CHANGE

REF: SAIGON 3638

1. AT THE MEETING OF OPPOSITIONIST LEADERS SPONSORED BY FORMER VICE PRESIDENT KY MAR 26 DESCRIBED REFTEL, IT WAS DECIDED THAT THE GROUP WOULD MEET ONCE AGAIN MAR 27 IN ORDER TO FORMALLY ORGANIZE AGREED-UPON ACTION COMMITTEE TO SAVE THE NATION. WE UNDERSTAND IT WAS ALSO DECIDED THAT GEN KY WOULD NOT PARTICIPATE IN THE MAR 27 MEETING.

2. THE ARREST OF TEN INDIVIDUALS OSTENSIBLY FOR PLOTTING, TO OVERTHROW THE GOVERNMENT, HOWEVER, WAS CLEARLY SEEN BY GEN KY AS DIRECTED AT HIM. THE LOCAL PRESS AND POLITICAL OBSERVERS TEND TO DRAW THE SAME CONCLUSION AND SUGGEST THAT ALL OR MOST OF THOSE ARRESTED ARE ASSOCIATES OF GEN KY.

3. ON MAR 27 GROUP MET ONCE AGAIN AND ELECTED PACM CHRM FR TRAN HUU THANH AS HEAD OF THE ACTION COMMITTEE. THANH IS QUOTED AS CALLING UPON PRES THIEU TO "DELEGATE FULL POWERS TO A NEW GOVT AND NEW PERSONALITIES WITH NEW POLICIES EFFECTIVE FOR THE NATIONAL SALVATION." FR THANH IS QUOTED AS ALSO SAYING THAT PRES THIEU COULD REMAIN IN POWER IF HE WISHES BUT THAT "HE WOULD BE LIKE THE EMPEROR OF JAPAN."

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4. GEN KY WAS PRESENT AT THIS MEETING AND, UPON ITS CONCLUSION, HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE AT WHICH HE SAID "IS SURE TO PROFIT THE COMMUNISTS. AS A MILITARY MAN," HE ADDED, "I SEE THIS AS THE BIGGEST DANGER. WE MUST TRY BY ALL MEANS FOR A DIALOGUE AMONG THE VARIOUS MOVEMENTS. THIS IS THE BEST WAY AND THE BEST SOLUTION." KY WENT ON TO CALL FOR A NEW GOVT WHICH THE PEOPLE CAN TRUST. HE DENIED THAT HE WAS THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION GROUP.

5. COMMENT: THESE DEVELOPMENTS SEEM LIKELY TO PROVE DISTINCTLY UNHELPFUL. IT WAS, IN ANY CASE, A RISKY TACK FOR TRAN VAN DO AND DANG VAN SUNG TO TAKE TO ENCOURAGE GEN KY TO INJECT HIMSELF INTO THE ALREADY DELICATE BUSINESS OF RECONCILIATION BETWEEN PRES THIEU AND THE RADICAL OPPOSITION. WHATEVER THE GOVT'S REASONS FOR THE ARRESTS OF THE "PLOTTERS", THEY WERE SEEN AS THE GOVT'S REACTION TO THIS DEVELOPING ALLIANCE. IN TURN, GEN KY'S PRESENCE AT THE SUBSEQUENT ELECTION OF FR THANH, THE POLITICAL LEADER MOST INVOLVED IN PERSONAL ATTACKS ON PRES THIEU, AS HEAD OF THE ACTION COMMITTEE TO SAVE THE NATION, CAN ONLY SERVE TO MAKE SUCCESSFUL COMPROMISE EVEN MORE DIFFICULT. FURTHERMORE, THE ACTION COMMITTEE REMAINS LIMITED IN ITS MEMBERSHIP. WE UNDERSTAND THAT FORMER SENATE CHRM AND CATHOLIC LAY LEADER NGUYEN VAN HUYEN WAS INVITED. REPORTEDLY HUYEN AGREED TO BE REPRESENTED BY SENATOR LE CHAU LOC BUT THE LATTER HAS NOT YET ATTENDED ANY MEETINGS OF THE GROUP.

MARTIN

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** Z  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** CABINET, GOVERNMENT OVERTHROW, REORGANIZATIONS, ARRESTS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 28 MAR 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** izenbei0  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
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**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** X2  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Office:** ACTION SS  
**Original Classification:** SECRET  
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**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
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**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** SECRET  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** EXDIS  
**Reference:** 75 SAIGON 3638  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** izenbei0  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 28 JUL 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <28 JUL 2003 by KelleyW0>; APPROVED <20 NOV 2003 by izenbei0>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
05 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** FURTHER ON POSSIBLE CABINET CHANGE  
**TAGS:** PINS, PINT, VS  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006